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SUBJECT: HUGO CHAVEZ' MAY 16 SPEECH

1. The following is a summary of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez' May 9 speech during the Venezuelan government's (GOV) "Rally for Peace and against Paramilitaries, and in Defense of Sovereignty and the Dignity of the Nation" in Caracas, which substituted for Chavez' usual Sunday Alo Presidente program. The speech was broadcast in a national "cadena," which all broadcast media were legally obliged to transmit. Bilateral issues included the GOV's ultimatum that U.S. military personnel vacate their offices at Fuerte Tiuna and other Venezuelan bases; GOV accusations that Miami was the epicenter of the foiled conspiracy to deploy Colombian paramilitaries to Venezuela to assassinate President Chavez; the announcement of the "Anti-Imperialist" phase of the Bolivarian Revolution; allegations of USG violations of human rights in Afghanistan and Iraq; and the alleged USG role in the April 2003 coup attempt against Chavez.

GOV Gives U.S. Military the Pink Slip

2. President Chavez confirmed his government's decision to order U.S. military personnel to vacate their offices on Venezuelan Armed Forces headquarters in Fuerte Tiuna in Caracas and in other bases in Venezuela. "I have ordered the U.S. military mission to leave Fuerte Tiuna, it was time to do so. What is a U.S. military mission doing in the very heart of Fuerte Tiuna? We have given them a deadline to leave . . . these are sovereign spaces where we cannot allow the presence of any international element, especially those of the North American Empire," said Chavez.

Colombian Paramilitaries - Miami Pulls the Strings

3. Chavez alleged that the recent infiltration of Colombian paramilitaries "in the heart of Caracas" was part of an international imperialistic conspiracy with headquarters in Miami, Colombia (Bogota, Cucuta), and Caracas. "Those who brought this network of accomplices here -- which has an epicenter in Miami, another in Bogota, in Cucuta, and here in Caracas -- these terrorist paramilitaries and the traitorous Venezuelans, who planned the invasion of the paramilitaries and whom they contracted like mercenaries . . . knew very well that these paramilitaries couldn't have overthrown the Venezuelan government, so their objective was the head of the President, to assassinate him, decapitate him," alleged Chavez. The U.S. imperialists and Colombian-Venezuelan oligarchies' "simple, macabre plan" would not succeed, however, and even if he were killed, Chavez would hear from his tomb the cry of the Venezuelan people against the "boot of U.S. imperialism" and in defense of Venezuela," averred Chavez.

The Revolution Advances to Anti-Imperialism Stage

4. The Bolivarian Revolution has entered its "anti-imperialist" stage, proclaimed Chavez to the audience of tens of thousands of government followers. He then proceeded to dictate the three lines of action to defend the country from imperialism:
-- strengthen the capacity of the National Armed Force (FAN). Chavez said this action was not an armament race. Rather, the new revolutionary phase called for increasing Venezuela's military contingent to augment operational capacity and mobility throughout the country, including establishing operational theaters in some central states. "The Hugo Chavez of 2002 (year of the coup d'etat) is now part of history; we are ready to face any threat," Chavez emphasized.

-- Reinforce the civic-military union. "It is necessary to remain alert and to reinforce the civic-military

union. It is up to every one of us; we have advanced a

lot, but we still have a way to go," insisted Chavez.

-- Form popular organizations to defend the homeland. "The Defense of the Mother Land is everyone's task," urged Chavez. "In each city slum, island, farming area, university, factory, forest, in each place where there is a group of patriots (...) people taking the leading role, together with the Armed Force (...)," Chavez proclaimed. "It is necessary to join efforts to ensure the national defense, time has come to revolutionize security, to give it a new concept, to re-orient it, because we are still working with the paradigms of the IV Republic. I call on all Venezuelans to join the defense of the homeland, of the national sovereignty ... In the coming weeks, with the advisory of the Council of Defense of the Nation (Codena) I will start issuing guidelines and instructions; I ask for the support of all the local powers, social movements, popular movements (...) Men and women of age that are not reservists, but who are in condition to become soldiers should get military training and organize themselves for the defense of the Mother land (...) Because nothing nor nobody will be able to beat Venezuela or a conscious and organized people," he added.

15. Chavez also called on the support of active and retired officials, such as Luis Reyes Reyes, Lara state Governor; Eliecer Otaiza Castillo, president of the National Institute of Educational Cooperation; Diosdado Cabello, candidate to Miranda governorship; Jesse Chacon, Communications and Information Minister; Hernan Gruber Odreman, former Governor of the Caracas area Federal District; Ronald Blanco La Cruz, Tachira state Governor; Florencio Porras, Merida state governor; and Pedro Carreno, National Assembly legislator. "The evaluation of retired officers is underway so that they begin giving military training wherever there is a group of patriots, with the people taking the leading role, together with the Armed Forces, to defend the country," insisted Chavez.

U.S. Imperialism: Afghanistan, Iraq

16. U.S. imperialism included flagrant violations of human rights, as evidenced by USG policy following September 11, in particular its policy on Afghanistan and Iraq, Chavez observed. "We were one of the few governments that dared to speak out when U.S. imperialism began with the invasion of Afghanistan, the bombing of towns and cities. I recall I showed a photo of a photo of dead children. I protested in the name of the Venezuelan people and our government, and this angered the government in Washington; we were only asking for respect for the life of Afghani children. . . We were right, especially after September 11, which the U.S. used as an excuse. U.S. imperialism took off its mask, took on the United Nations, disrespected the Security Council, to invade Afghanistan, then Iraq," claimed Chavez.

April 11 -- Again

17. Following Chavez' accusations of U.S. imperialism, he launched into his usual allegations that the April 2002 coup attempt against him could only have occurred with USG complicity. . . "There is an important detail, September 11, April 11, 2002; the fascist coup occurred only seven months after September 11, and everyone knows that this coup could only occur thanks to U.S. support and the support from groups from other countries," asserted Chavez.

Shapiro

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